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SUBJECT: FAINA: LETTER FROM FOREIGN MINISTER OHRYZKO

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1. (SBU) Embassy was called in to the MFA Consular Department February 4 to receive a letter to the Secretary from Foreign Minister Ohryzko concerning the negotiations regarding the ship, Faina, held for ransom by Somali pirates. Embassy has emailed a scanned copy of the original to EUR/UMB. Begin informal Embassy translation:

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

February 3, 2009

Honorable Ms. Clinton,

I have the honor to address you asking for your assistance in an urgent matter because the lives of 20 innocent people are in danger.

The crew of the vessel Faina has been in the captivity of Somali pirates for more than four months. The crew consists of 17 citizens of Ukraine, two citizens of Russia and one citizen of Latvia.

According to the established international practice, the owner of the vessel conducts the negotiations with the pirates about freeing of the sailors and the vessel, based on his financial solvency and keeping to the requirements of the Resolution of the UN Security Council (1851) dated December 16, 2008, which prohibits the excessive increase of ransom offered to the sea corsairs.

Lately, the above-mentioned complicated negotiations process has been hindered by the active involvement into the process of Ms. Michele Lynn Golden-Ballarín, a U.S. citizen, DOB 08/31/1955, resident of Merhem, VA, an owner of the companies "Select Armour Inc.," "Black Star Holding," and the investment fund "Cambridge Wealth Management Ltd.," who is also using her developed connections in Somali and Great Britain.

Having absolutely no authority from the owner of the vessel, the indicated person has become an intermediary of the sea corsairs in this negotiation process. In fact, her actions incite the pirates to the groundless increase of the ransom sum offered by the owner of the vessel, thus creating an obstacle for the positive solution of this issue.

Taking into consideration the deep concern of the Ukrainian side about the undesirable developments in the process of freeing "Faina", triggered by the actions of the abovementioned U.S. citizen, I address you with the request to facilitate the exclusion of Ms. Golden-Ballarín from the negotiation process with the pirates.

I wish to renew my sincere assurances of the highest consideration.

Sincerely,

[I](#)V. Ohryzko
Minister

Taylor